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ABSTRACT

This manual is designed for tutors who are helping to teach workplace literacy to job seekers or newly employed adults, especially former migrant farm workers in Florida. The manual is organized in five sections. The first section contains background material, including an overview of the program, and information about adult learners, migrant farm workers, small businesses, and adult educators. The second section presents teaching techniques, describing the tutor's role, along with teaching strategies and learning styles. In the third section, workplace literacy is described, and some workplace terms are defined; suggestions for the first meeting between tutor and client are made. The fourth section consists of three sample lessons on reading, information grids, and production, and the final section lists eight resources in Florida. (KC)

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GETTING AHEAD

...AND STAYING THERE

Workplace Literacy
Tutor Manual

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This manual has been developed with funds
provided by the National Institute for Literacy
as part of the Basic Skills and Job Retention project.

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WORKPLACE EDUCATION

Introduction

Welcome to the world of Workplace Education.

Teaching workplace education is not conjugating verbs, diagramming sentences, or memorizing historical dates.

Workplace education skills consists of reading and deciphering packing lists, time cards, employee manuals, schedules, memos, and invoices. Workplace skills also involve deciphering charts, calculating numbers of parts, and communicating effectively with coworkers and management--both verbally and in writing.

NOTES

Workshop Syllabus

Introductions - Getting to Know You

Overview of National Institute for Literacy

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- The Adult Learner
- The Migrant Farm Worker
- The Small Business
- The Adult Educator

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Background

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An Overview

The Goals

To help the newly employed migrant client make the transition from farm work to the business community by assisting him/her in learning the basic skills necessary to retain employment.
To assist SMALL businesses with basic skills training where the number of employees is too small to warrant establishing the typical classroom/instructor format.

The Students

Adults who are eligible for assistance through the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program are recruited by the migrant counselors. Many of those recruited read at a low level, left school before graduating, struggle with a poor self concept, and often have financial burdens.

The Strategies

The newly recruited migrant clients are given the TABE test. If a high school diploma is needed, they are placed in GED preparation classes. Others are placed in vocational classes or are assisted in a job search. Clients who are seeking employment are scheduled to participate in a Pre-employment Class.

Once a migrant client is ready for employment, the Migrant Counselors search for job leads at local businesses. The migrant client contacts the potential employer to arrange for an interview. When employment is obtained, the Lead Instructor meets with the employer to determine the basic skills needs of the job. Lessons are planned, and tutors instruct the new employee.

NOTES

The Adult Learner

A study prepared by Abram and Cobb of recent high school dropouts concerning motivation for leaving school, future educational plans, and family history found that students' second and third most frequent responses for leaving school were "school was not teaching me what I wanted to know" and "I had poor grades and didn't think I would graduate." When asked to check all the response categories that listed ways the school could have helped them remain in school, the response that tied for first place along with "other" was "a special teacher to help me with my studies."[1]

YOU ARE THAT SPECIAL TEACHER

Experts estimate that anywhere from twenty to eighty million adults are lacking adequate basic skills to be able to function effectively in their daily lives. They have trouble communicating with co-workers, family, and friends. They lack sufficient reading, writing, mathematical solving skills to be able to work productively or help their children with school work. Many of these adults never graduated from high school.

A repetitive theme among undereducated adults seems to be low self-esteem, a history of failure, a lack of realistic goals, and a low perception of the need for education. It therefore takes a great deal of courage to return to school which, for many, had been an unpleasant experience.

If the decision to return to school is made, there is usually a determining factor--to qualify for a job or a promotion, to help children with school work, or to attend college. Once the determining factor is realized, the decision is made, and the courage is mustered, adults are mentally ready to learn.

[1]Abram, M.J., Cobb, R.A. (1981). A Survey of Recent Dropouts Concerning Motivation for Leaving School, Future Educational Plans, and Family History. Bowling Green, KY: Western Kentucky University, College of Education (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 197 917) 11.

NOTES

The Migrant Farmworker

"Despite the several billions of dollars that have been spent by the federal government over the past fifteen years, American farmworkers and their families still live and work under conditions which are cruel and harsh by any standard: they are ill-housed, ill-clothed, undernourished, face enormous health hazards, are underpaid, underemployed, undereducated, socially isolated, politically powerless, excluded from much of the work-protective legislation that other American workers take for granted, and unable to compete in the labor market for the higher wages that would permit them to resolve their own problems or ameliorate the bleak reality of their existence." (Report of the Task Panel on Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, President's Commission on Mental Health)

The above excerpt adequately summarizes the needs of farmworkers in the state of Florida. Farmworkers in Seminole County face an additional burden, a major change in the economy which is effecting their future. The county has become a "bedroom community" for the Orlando metropolitan area. Seminole was listed as one of the fastest-growing counties in the United States (Wall Street Journal, October 25, 1990.) The properties owned by farmers are becoming more valuable as real estate developments than as farmlands.

As the properties are converted, job openings change from agricultural to service industries such as secretaries, cashiers, janitors, nurses, security guards, and child care workers.

It is difficult for many farmworkers to make the transition. But help is available through Seminole Community College's Adult Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program. The program assists former migrant and seasonal farmworkers in qualifying for jobs through general education and occupational training programs. Since 1972, between 80 and 90 migrants, farmworkers, and their dependents have been assisted each year.

NOTES

The Small Business

A business that employs less than 250 employees is considered to be a small business. Most of the businesses in Seminole County fall into that category with many employing one to fifty workers.

A great deal of planning and research is necessary to open a successful small business. However, opening the business is just the beginning. Running the business on a day to day basis presents the owner with an altogether different set of issues to face. Some of those issues must be continually revisited and evaluated to determine future goals and projections.

Management and finance decisions are a time-consuming component of running a business as are sales, procurement, inventory, and personnel. In many small businesses, the owner is the sole administrator. It is not unusual for the owner to work, as some say, "twenty-four hours a day." He/she becomes a jack-of-all-trades and a master of nearly anything that arises.

Hiring competent, well trained employees is crucial to the growth and prosperity of the small business. But competing with mid- and large-sized companies for highly qualified employees is difficult since many small businesses operate on a shoestring. The owner therefore hires the best he/she can afford, and, in addition to the roles of president, buyer, personnel manager, and salesman, the owner adds the role of employee trainer to his/her already overextended duties.

In spite of all the pressures on small business owners, many businesses succeed and thrive. As they become leaders in the community, they help set an example for other small businesses, they increase economic development, and some even bring global recognition to the area.

The Adult Educator

You have chosen to help adults learn. Adults usually come to their class interested, ready, eager, willing, and motivated to learn. To facilitate the learning experience, a teacher must not only present subject matter, but also be:

PATIENT

Sometimes students will not readily "catch on" to what is being taught. The lesson may have to be taught again and again. Try explaining the lesson in a different manner. Above all, never show irritation or disappointment when the student does not understand.

EMPATHETIC

Most adults have many responsibilities in their lives. In addition to spouses, children, homes, extended families, etc., many undereducated adults are plagued by monumental financial obligations. Be understanding and empathetic; however, don't get involved in your student's problems. Gently draw the student back to the lesson.

FLEXIBLE

Depending on the workload, sometimes your student will not be able to spend the full, allotted time with you. Sometimes another lesson will be needed that is altogether different from the one you prepared. Be ready to meet the challenge of change.

CREATIVE

A lesson does not have to be presented in exactly the way it was prepared. If you sense that your student is not understanding the lesson, try to present it from another direction.

A GOOD LISTENER

How you listen to your student will either encourage his/her learning or depress it. Pay close attention when your student speaks; learning is taking place as he/she formulates ideas. Attune yourself also to listen not only to what your student is saying, but also to what he/she is not saying. Try to sense discouragement, discontent, or frustration. Use your creativity to teach your student something that will be a sure success. "Nothing succeeds like success itself."

ENCOURAGING

Learn to find something good in as many tasks your student performs as you can. Even the slightest word of praise, encouragement, a smile, or a hand-shake will help your student over the rough spots. Never humiliate your student. When the student belittles him/herself, listen patiently and focus on the situation not the person. Reinforce your positive feelings for the student.

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Teaching Techniques

NOTES

Your Role As Tutor

A tutor is a special type of person. A tutor is committed to expending the time and energy necessary to help teach basic skills to newly employed migrant clients. A tutor's dedication may help shape a life forever. Many times a tutor is called upon to be a role model, advisor, and friend. A tutor's role is to:

1. Help your student set and achieve basic skills goals.

2. Remember your student is an adult. Treat him/her with the same respect you would grant any adult.

3. Be fully prepared to teach each lesson.

4. Be a good listener, but remember to honor your student's confidentiality.

5. Be liberal with praise; encourage him or her.

6. Let your student know who you are. Share information.

7. Be sincere and honest.

8. Learn your student's name. Use it.

Teaching Strategies

NOTES

1. Get the student's attention by asking questions. "Why is it important to have this information first?" "When is the widget carrier used?" If an individual is motivated, he/she will pay attention. However, don't dwell on material the student already knows; you'll lose his/her attention from boredom.

2. Use photographs, pictures and symbols to relate new material. The more colorful the visuals or the more concrete the story, the better. Use mnemonic devices (rhymes, tales, or mental pictures) that the student can relate to and, therefore, associate the lesson with.

3. Retention is greater when lessons are presented in a structured, organized manner. Organize material by job duty, time frame, theme, etc., for greater memory retention.

4. Ask for feedback from the student often. Get the student to tell you, in his/her own words, what he/she has learned from the newly taught lesson.

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The Language of Encouragement

Encouragement has its own language. Appropriate encouragement avoids value judgements by eliminating words like good, great, and terrific. Instead, encouragement helps your student believe in themselves.

Phrases that demonstrate ACCEPTANCE

- I like the way you handled that.
- How do you feel about this?
- I'm glad you enjoyed yourself.
- Since you're not satisfied, what do you think you can do so you will be pleased with it?

Phrases that show CONFIDENCE

- You'll make it!
- You're making progress.
- I believe you'll handle it.
- I have confidence in your judgment.

Phrases that recognize EFFORT and IMPROVEMENT

- I can see you put a lot of effort into that.
- I can see a lot of progress.
- You're improving in _____. (Be specific)
- You may not feel you've reached your goal, but look how far you've come.

from the Performance-Based Diploma Program Mentor Manual, School District of Indian River County, Vero Beach, FL

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Learning Styles and the Adult Learner

Everyone's personality includes a unique mix of traits--some more dominant than others. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator classifies these personality traits into eight groups.

Personality traits and how an individual learns go hand-in hand. Effective learning takes place when lessons are presented in a manner that coincides with a particular learning style.

Following is an abbreviated compilation by Dr. Marguerite Culp of the Myers-Briggs personality type learning styles:

An *extroverted* person prefers:
- to be where things are happening
- to pursue many interests
- to learn by trial and error
- to think out loud and express opinions as they form them

An *introverted* person prefers:
- to have privacy and quiet time
- to pursue a few interests
- to think about a new idea before discussing it
- to approach new subjects/people with caution

A *sensing* person prefers:
- concrete experiences/real life examples
- step-by-step instruction
- practical here and now tasks
- to learn through their senses (see, touch, taste, handle)

An *intuitive* person prefers
- constant stimulation
- a global picture of a task/assignment
- tasks that require imagination and inspiration
- to learn through intuitive "leaps"
- to know why something works/happens

A *thinking* type prefers:
- order, fairness, justice
- analytical/rational supervision
- competition
- respect and recognition
- learning/working alone

A feeling person prefers:
- harmony
- understanding/accepting supervision
- friendship
- praise and approval
- learning/working in groups

A *perceptive* person prefers
- variety/change
- gathering information
- few limits, little structure
- keeping options open
- autonomy

A *judging* person prefers:
- structure/predictability
- using information
- clearly defined limits
- quick closure

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The Workplace

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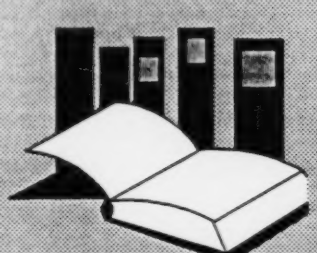
Three Types of Literacy

Functional Literacy

Used everyday involving life skills. A person is considered functionally literate if he/she can perform tasks such as shopping wisely, writing checks, deciphering bills, reading instructions on a prescription label, reading and following a recipe or helping children with school work.



Workplace Literacy

Used in the workplace. Involves job-specific vocabulary and computations. An employee is considered workplace literate if he/she can read job specific instructions, charts, schedules memos, etc., and effectively communicate and perform the day-to-day procedures of the workplace.

Academic Literacy

Generally used in an academic environment. A person is considered academically literate if he/she uses a high level of reading, writing and computation skills. A college education is common at this level of literacy.

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NOTES

Workplace Lingo

Define these workplace-related words. Then share your definitions with another participant.[1]

CBT _____

Cross Training _____

Employee Involvement _____

Functional context _____

HR-HRD-HRM _____

JIT _____

Line workers and staff workers _____

Literacy audit _____

MSDS _____

Needs Assessment/Needs Analysis _____

OD _____

P&L _____

Pay for Skills _____

Performance Improvement _____

Problem-solving _____

Rework/scrap _____

Self-directed work team _____

SPC _____

T&D _____

TQM _____

Vendor _____

Work cell _____

[1] From: Mrowicki, Linda (1993, March) Workforce Literacy Task Analysis and Curriculum Adaptation Workshop. Workshop conducted at the FLorida Literacy Conference, Tampa, FL

Your First Meeting

NOTES

When you meet with your student for the first time, plan to discuss the following:

_____ Days, time, and place to meet.

_____ Procedures to keep in touch (telephone numbers etc.).

_____ What name the tutor wants the student to use (Mr. Smith, Frank).

_____ Introduction of tutor to colleagues.

_____ Orientation of tutor to workplace (restrooms, where to park, location of snack machines or room, etc.)

_____ What new employee can expect to gain from tutoring.

What the lead instructor will discuss with you prior to meeting your new student:

_____ Pertinent background information about the student with whom the tutor will be working

_____ Special strengths and weaknesses of the student.

_____ Basic skills to be taught.

_____ Pertinent background information about the employer for whom the student will be working

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Sample Lessons

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Sample Lesson - Reading

COMPETENCY: Placement of Warning Device for Parked Vehicles
BASIC SKILLS: Reading Comprehension; Measurements
INDUSTRY SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY: CDL, warning device, vehicle, shoulder, obstruction, divided highway, triangles, approaching, oncoming

SET THE STAGE

- Identify the topic

Today we're going to find out what you should do when you must park your truck along the side of the road.

- Question student about his/her background knowledge

Has your car ever broken down on a highway before? Tell me about it.

- Question student about his/her perceived need

Why can't you just pull your truck off the road the same as you would a car?

- Establish the goals of the lesson with the students

By the end of this lesson, you will feel more comfortable with emergency procedures.

PROVIDE INSTRUCTION

PRE-READING

- Ask "background" questions

What would be the first thing you would do if you had to pull the truck you were driving off the road?

- Ask "describing" and "predicting" questions about the visuals or the text.

What do you think would happen if there were no warning lights?

READING

- Silent reading first!
- Silent reading again

Read pages 27 and 28. Ask "What did you understand?"
Ask specific, comprehensive questions: "How many feet ahead and behind a parked truck must a warning device be placed?"

POST-READING

- Explain the activity, question/answer, close, etc.
- Review the activity

Show student a picture of a two lane highway, a four lane divided highway, a curved highway, and a hill. Have student place appropriate warning devices.
Show student how to "walk off" three feet at a time. Use yard stick to measure.

CLOSURE

- Discuss perceptions about activity

What have you learned from this lesson?

Adapted from: Mrowicki, Linda (1993, March) Workforce Literacy Task Analysis and Curriculum Adaptation Workshop. Workshop conducted at the Florida Literacy Conference, Tampa, FL

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SET THE STAGE

- Identify the topic
- Question student about his/her background knowledge
- Question student about his/her perceived needs
- Establish the goals of lesson with the students

PROVIDE INSTRUCTION

- Show student empty grid
- Ask questions to check student's comprehension
- Use a written comprehension check

CLOSURE

- Discuss student's perceptions about the activity
- Show student meal grid

Sample Lesson - Information Grids

COMPETENCY: Read a production chart
BASIC SKILLS: Read a chart/grid, know abbreviations
INDUSTRY SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY: diabetic, vegetarian, calorie, liquid, diet, restrictions, dietary

What charts have you read in the past?

How would you go about reading this chart?

Why do you think it is important to know how to read a production chart?

By the end of this lesson, you will feel comfortable when you read this chart.

Elicit information to complete the grid.: What are the names of the people working in your area? What rooms are assigned to each of them?
How many rooms is Mary responsible for?
Who takes care of Room 212?

OPTION A: Write statements and have student indicate Yes or No
OPTION B: Write questions and have students answer the questions with short answers or complete sentences.
OPTION C: Write fill-in-the blank statements for student to complete.
OPTION D: Student writes information in complete sentences
OPTION E: Student uses grid to write a descriptive paragraph

If your supervisor were to give you this chart, would you feel comfortable reading it?

Adapted from: Mrowicki, Linda (1993, March) Workforce Literacy Task Analysis and Curriculum Adaptation Workshop. Workshop conducted at the Florida Literacy Conference, Tampa, FL

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Sample Lesson - Comprehension

COMPETENCY: Read special instructions
BASIC SKILLS: Read instructions, know abbreviations
INDUSTRY SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY: t or tsp.= teaspoon, T or Tbl. = tablespoon, allergic, dosage, reaction, 2 x day

SET THE STAGE

- Identify the topic
- Question student about his/her background knowledge.
- Question student about his/her perceived needs.
- Establish the goals of the lesson with the students.

Many children come to day care with special instructions.

Do you have children? Have you ever had to follow special instructions for a period of time?

Why do you think it is important to be able to read special instructions very carefully?

By the end of this lesson, you will be more familiar with special instructions.

PROVIDE INSTRUCTION

- Describe the visual using comprehensible language.
- Ask student to demonstrate comprehension by "pointing to..." or answering "Yes/No" or "WH" questions.

Let's read these special instruction notes from parents and doctors.

Who is taking Amoxil? How many times a day? How much? What precautions must you take when Janie is outside? Can you give a glass of milk to Tommy?

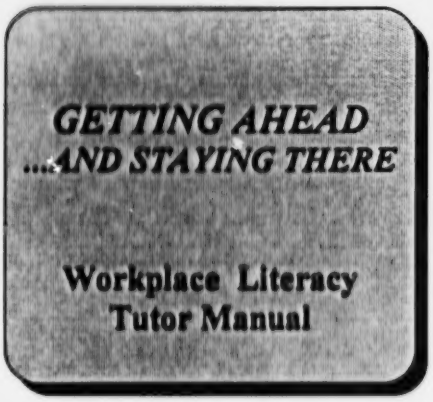
CLOSURE

- Discuss student's perception about the activity.

What have you learned from this lesson that you did not know before?

Adapted from: Mrowicki, Linda (1993, March) Workforce Literacy Task Analysis and Curriculum Adaptation Workshop. Workshop conducted at the Florida Literacy Conference, Tampa, FL

Resources



Available Resources

Your students will be working in a variety of jobs. The following list will give you some available resources if you need help planning additional lessons for your students.

Seminole Community College Building B	For academic skills materials, there are math and English books and supplement papers available in Room B221 C. For workplace related materials, there are a variety of books available in Room B221 C.
Seminole Community College Library	For a variety of materials on a variety of subjects.
Seminole Community College Career Center Student Center Building	For material relating to various jobs.
Community Coordinated Child Care SCC Old Campus	For material relating to workers in a Day Care Center.
Job Services Sanford - Casselberry	For materials relating to various jobs.
Place of Employment	Inquire in the personnel office or ask the manager, owner, foreman or supervisor.
Driver's License Bureau Airport Blvd. Oak Grove Plaza Sanford Altamonte Springs	For information about chauffeur's or commercial driver's licenses.
Seminole County Extension Service 250 County Home Road, Sanford	For consumer information.